1; Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

525 The outstanding features of gambling games are swiftness, excitement, and movement. The aim is to confuse the guesser by as much distraction as possible. Intense emotion is concentrated in the playing and the rests between games, when losers throw over their forfeits, are very welcome. These rests are often prolonged when a winner fails to catch his forfeit and must hunt for it in the grass, or when a winner has to give his opponent change for a bill. If a man loses and has no money to pay his bet, he may continue playing and owe his opponent the losses. White men who gamble are often confused by the custom of a man temporarily leaving the game to rest, eat, or urinate. Nobody represents him on his team but, unless he clearly indicates that he is "through," the absentee player continues to participate in the winnings or losses of his side and is obliged to pay his forfeits or entitled to collect his winnings.

Confident players can afford to bankrupt while they are hiding, particularly if they are playing against a naive captain. Louis Mann, for example, after withdrawing his hands from below the blanket, provocatively stretched one fist toward the fire, placing the other behind his back. As was obviously expected, the captain indicated the hidden hand. Triumphantly Louis displayed the token in the outstretched hand. Sometimes games become contests between two dominant personalities who enjoy reputations as capable players, as when Louis Mann played against Nick Lang, each being captain of one team. Repeatedly both of these men would kill everyone on the other side but the opposing captain, and the game would continue with one captain matching his wits against the other. The swiftness of the game facilitates cheating, and sometimes games break up with considerable hard feeling as one side accuses the other of unfair playing. In general, the Indians are not good losers and resentment often makes its appearance in the form of nagging and muffled derogatory remarks concerning the opponents. It is obvious that the game is not played for the financial stakes lost rather for the excitement and pleasure which the gambling promotes.

LIFE CYCLE

Birth and Infancy

844 Although in 1945 one woman, Dorothy Flores, gave birth to a son in the hospital at Whitehorse, most women continue to bear children without white medical assistance. Whenever possible an attempt is made to keep the expectant mother in a winter settlement where experienced female help will be available to assist in delivery and postnatal care. This assistance is not always possible, however, and sometimes (especially if birth is premature) an older woman is forced to deliver her own child or is assisted by her white husband. [754] No case was heard of an Indian man aiding parturition. During the summer at Lower Post, a mature woman is generally called upon when labor becomes severe. The duration of labor noted was from three to nine hours, the latter for a fourth pregnancy.

Delivery is with the parturient in a sitting position. The cord is cut with scissors, and mother and child are then washed with warm water. The baby, its legs laid straight, is wrapped in blankets with the hands bound to its sides and placed in bed next to the mother. [845] The afterbirth is thrown far away in the bush or may be hung in a tree. No special precautions are taken with premature babies.

844 lodges. Some were excavated slightly so that the in-
349 side consisted of a shallow hole or depression a
little lower than the base of the lodge walls. These
lodges were carpeted with moss or dry grass. Near one
end of the lodge a short pole was sunk solidly in the
844 ground. This formed a vertical post in height about
equal to a person sitting on the ground. The butt end
of a lighter pole was sunk in the floor of the lodge
a short distance from the post and the smaller end bent
down and fastened to the latter at a point a little
below the top of same. This pole formed a kind of
quarter circle or half bow and was adjusted for length
and height to suit the woman's convenience. Over this
pole the woman leaned with her arms embracing it or
holding it when giving birth, or at least when having
birth pains. The woman was attended by one or more
• [759] (generally several) female relatives or neighbors who
had experience or who had given birth to children.
The woman's husband and all men were excluded from
presence at the confinement and they were not expected
to give assistance of any kind. Only in cases of child
birth when no women happened to be near, did the woman's
[846] husband attend to his wife. When giving birth was
difficult or protracted the midwife (or attendant
women) helped delivery by kneading and massaging down-
wards, etc., on the belly and sometimes also with her
hand in dilating and assisting the passage of the child.
Hot drinks were also given the woman. Midwives gen-
erally felt along the neck of the child being born to
see the string did not encircle the neck and cause
choking. Only in cases of very hard births was the
845 assistance of men or doctors sought. These men were
759 shamans or others who had knowledge of the mystery of
birth. All of them had actually witnessed the birth
of game, viz., had seen goats, caribou and other game
animals giving birth to their young. They also in
communion with their manitous had received knowledge
about the mystery of birth or had been instructed by
game mothers regarding same. Some of these men had
helped game to give birth and they were considered the
most powerful of this class of men. Generally they
had helped a female of some kind of game to give birth
by striking or touching her with gun cover, a stick,
switch, skin, etc. Some helped in other ways such as
by painting her red. Thus each man differed somewhat
in method and experience. No two were exactly alike
in their knowledge and procedure. When a case was
much protracted and had gone beyond the powers of the
midwives one of these men was summoned. Before
entering he went around the confinement lodge sunwise,

then he touched the patient with a switch or painted her red, or did whatever he had been accustomed to do when helping caribou, goat or other game mothers to give birth. This helped the woman to give birth naturally or as easily as game. If one of these men had helped an animal to give birth and the young had been stillborn or had died shortly after birth, he never tried his powers on women nor attempted to help them, for if he did their children would also be stillborn or would die in the same way.

The navel string was tied with sinew thread and cut with any kind of sharp knife (scissors are often used nowadays). No medicine was given to hasten the coming of the afterbirth. The latter was taken to some secluded place near by and hung up in a tree. The length of the string connecting the afterbirth with the child was observed. If it was long it was said the child would live to a great age. If of moderate length the child would live to an average age and if short the child would die young. The midwife wiped the mouth, nose and eyes of the newly born infant and touched these features lightly with her fingers as if shaping them in a certain way. This was done so these features would grow right and afterwards be of good shape and proportion. The head was not touched nor shaped in any way at birth or later. Dressing of infants' heads was never practised

After childbirth the mother was
fed soft food for several days and given plenty of water to drink. Many also drank copiously of medicines of at least two kinds, viz., a decoction of the sap wood of spruce, and a decoction of the wood of a black berry. Mothers were also fed on soups of meat and salmon or drank the nourishing brews obtained from the boiling of the staple foods. It is said this had the effect of improving and increasing the milk supply and was therefore beneficial for the baby. When the mother felt strong and well enough she returned to the living lodge. No payments were made to midwives. Some informants say that probably very long ago some midwives may have received pay but they are not sure of this. Some wealthy men at the birth of their children gave a feast to the neighbours and distributed skins and leather, etc., among them as presents. It seems this ceremony generally took place when a man's wife returned with her baby from the confinement lodge, but some gave it soon after the birth was announced.

262 846 [278] [227] 846 [159]

There was a custom if the infant was a male for the father to repair to the confinement lodge shortly after the afterbirth had come. He took with him a miniature bow and arrows, the latter about five inches long. These he had made as soon as he had learned his child was a boy.

Holding them in the infant's hands, he made